

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Re-examination and favorable reconsideration in light of the above amendments and the following comments are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 - 22 are pending in the application. Currently, claims 1 - 11 are allowed; claims 12, 13, 15, 16, and 19 - 22 are rejected; and claims 14, 17, and 18 are objected to.

By the present amendment, claims 12 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 17; claim 14 has been amended to be in independent form; claim 18 has had its dependency changed to claim 12; claim 17 has been cancelled in light of the amendment to claim 12; and claim 19 has been amended.

In the office action mailed July 26, 2005, claims 19 and 22 were objected to. Appropriate correction has been made to claim 19 to overcome the objections.

Claims 12, 13, 15, 16, and 19 - 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,484,105 to Ausdenmoore et al.

The foregoing rejection is traversed by the instant response.

Claims 12, 13, 15, and 16 are now allowable over Ausdenmoore et al. by virtue of the incorporation of the subject matter of objected to claim 17 into claim 12.

Claim 19 has been amended to include the following limitation: "said bridge members providing step comprising providing a plurality of bridge members each having lower surfaces which diverge away from an upper surface of one of said sealing elements". Ausdenmoore et al. does not teach or suggest providing such bridge members. Consequently, claim 19 is now allowable over Ausdenmoore et al.

Claims 20 - 22 are allowable for the same reasons that claim 19 is allowable as well as on their own accord.

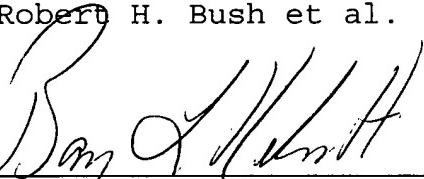
There being no further rejections or objections, the instant application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Such allowance is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe an additional amendment is needed to place the case in condition for allowance, he is hereby invited to contact Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge the extra independent claim fee of \$200.00 to Deposit Account No. 21-0279. Should the Director determine that an additional fee is due, he is hereby authorized to charge said fee to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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I, Nicole Motzer, hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: "Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313" on October 26, 2005.

